

# DAIMLERCHRYSLER

December 12, 2003

DaimlerChrysler Corporation

Stephan J. Speth

Director

Vehicle Compliance & Safety Affairs

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein  
Associate Administrator, Safety Assurance  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

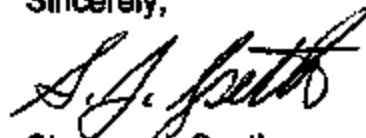
03V-528 ① of ⑦

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Attached is DaimlerChrysler Corporation's Defect Information Report, complying with the requirements of 49 CFR Part 573, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, which contains details of a potential safety related defect in some 2004 model year Dodge Durango vehicles. An instrument cluster circuit board capacitor may overheat, potentially resulting in an instrument panel fire.

DaimlerChrysler Corporation will issue a stop sale order and conduct a voluntary safety recall to remove the capacitor, which is redundant, from the circuit board on the affected vehicles.

Sincerely,



Stephan J. Speth

Enclosures: Stop Sale Order - DaimlerChrysler Corporation Recall #C43  
Defect Information Report for DaimlerChrysler Corporation Recall #C43  
Dealer and Owner Notification Letters for Recall #C43

cc: K. C. DeMeter, NHTSA  
Division of Occupational Safety & Health  
California Department of Industrial Relations

**DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER RECALL #C43**

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**Submission date:** December 12, 2003

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**Identifying classification of vehicles potentially affected:**

Make	Model	Model Year	Inclusive Dates of Manufacture	Vehicle Volume
Dodge	Durango	2004	04/03/2003– 12/07/2003	27,586

The involved Vehicle Identification Number range is:

<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
4F100001	4F142491

(VIN last eight characters) - 4 = 2004 model year; F = Newark Assembly Plant, Newark, Delaware; and the last six digits = sequential number.

**We caution that the above range represents only the lowest and highest VIN sequential numbers included in the recall. This range cannot be used to determine conclusively that a vehicle is involved in the recall because some vehicles with a VIN within the range are not affected by the recall.**

**Estimated percentage containing defect:** Unknown**Description of defect:**

An instrument cluster circuit board capacitor may overheat, potentially resulting in an instrument panel fire.

**The following chronology of principal events occurred between late November and mid December 2003 and led to the determination of a defect:**

- On November 24, 2003, a Detroit dealership identified smoke in the area of the instrument panel cluster during a routine vehicle preparation. Analysis showed localized melting of the instrument cluster circuit board on the right hand side. The part was returned for further analysis.
- On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003, a Florida rail shipping yard reported that a fire had originated in the area of the instrument cluster in a new 2004 Durango being unloaded for delivery.
- On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 the Florida vehicle was investigated by DaimlerChrysler engineering. The investigation revealed that the source of the fire was located at the right side of the instrument cluster. The cluster was removed and taken to Huntsville Electronics, the supplier, for further analysis.
- Also on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 during a daily conference call with the Newark Assembly Plant, an operator reported smelling smoke on a vehicle assembled on

**DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER RECALL #C43**

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November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The vehicle was investigated by resident engineers at the plant, resulting in no identified issues at that time. Later that day the vehicle was located and reviewed at a Detroit dealership. Analysis of the instrument cluster from this vehicle showed localized heating at the C293 capacitor located on the right hand side of the circuit board.

- On December 5<sup>th</sup> Newark Assembly Plant was directed to stop shipment and contain production vehicles due to the above findings.
- Analysis of multiple instrument clusters revealed that capacitor C293 appeared to be internally cracked on a small percentage of the samples. A cross-section of the capacitor exhibited a classic bending crack signature at a 45 degree angle starting at the top end section.
- Cause for the cracked capacitor appears to be related to robotic assembly of the circuit board, but this remains under investigation.
- Analysis determined the cracked capacitor can lead to a low resistive path within the device, subsequent overheating of the part and potentially ignition of the board and its surrounding components.
- Corrective action removed the C293 capacitor from the instrument cluster.
- The C293 capacitor provided redundant transient voltage suppression during door lock usage. Bench and vehicle level testing verified that no compromise to the functionality of the cluster or door lock system occurs due to the removal of this capacitor.
- There are no customer reports related to this issue.
- This data was presented to the Vehicle Regulations Committee who decided to order a stop sale and conduct a safety recall to repair the affected vehicles.

**Statement of measures to be taken to correct defect:**

DaimlerChrysler Corporation will remove the capacitor, which is redundant, from the circuit board on the affected vehicles. DaimlerChrysler is initiating national notification to dealers on December 12, 2003 and owners on December 17, 2003.

DaimlerChrysler Corporation has a longstanding policy and practice of reimbursing owners who have incurred the cost of repairing a problem that subsequently becomes the subject of a field action. To ensure consistency, DaimlerChrysler Corporation, as part of the owner letter, will request that customers send original receipt and/or other adequate proof of payment to the company for confirmation of the expense.

\*To:dlrall\$1,dlrall\$2,dlrall\$3,dlrall\$4

ATTN: Service and Sales Managers

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Safety Recall #C43 - Instrument Cluster Capacitor  
STOP SALE ORDER

**Involved Vehicles:**

2004 (HB) Dodge Durango vehicles built through December 7,  
2003 (MDH 120701).

An instrument cluster circuit board capacitor on about 27,000 of the above vehicles may overheat and cause an instrument panel fire. Dealers are required to IMMEDIATELY STOP THE SALE of these vehicles and perform the repair for this condition prior to retail delivery. The repair takes less than one hour and requires no parts or special tools. All unsold vehicles can be sold as new and delivered to customers after this repair is performed.

**IMPORTANT:** ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS, MOST OF THE INVOLVED VEHICLES ARE STILL IN DEALER NEW VEHICLE INVENTORY. FEDERAL LAW REQUIRES YOU TO STOP SALE AND COMPLETE THIS RECALL SERVICE ON THESE VEHICLES BEFORE RETAIL DELIVERY.

Dealers must also contact owners of sold vehicles involved in this recall and arrange to have this repair performed immediately.

**VIN LISTS ON DEALERCONNECT GLOBAL RECALL SYSTEM:**

All involved vehicles have been entered into the DealerCONNECT Global Recall System (GRS) for dealer inquiry as needed. To use this system, click on the "Service" tab and then click on "Global Recall System." Your dealer's VIN list for this recall can be sorted by: those vehicles that were unsold at recall launch, those with a phone number, city, zip code, or VIN sequence. If C43 is not listed, there are no involved vehicles assigned to your dealer code.

**IMPORTANT:** The entire dealer recall notification letter can be viewed on STAR Online. From the DealerCONNECT Service tab, select "STAR Online", then select "STAR Center News & Documents" and then select "Safety Recall #C43 - Instrument Cluster Capacitor" in the "Documents and Reference Sheets" section.

In addition, the recall notification letter will be available on TechCONNECT on Tuesday December 16, 2003. Additional copies of the recall notification letter will also be forwarded via DCMS mail in the near future.

The above recall is being mailed today to all dealers by FIRST CLASS MAIL in an orange-bordered envelope that reads:

**ATTENTION: SERVICE MANAGER**

RECALL MATERIAL ENCLOSED  
IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED

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The envelope contains one copy of the dealer recall service instruction letter and a VIN listing for the involved vehicles your dealership was invoiced. Please advise your appropriate personnel to forward the orange-bordered recall envelope to your Service manager as soon as it is received.

THE OWNER NOTIFICATION MAILING FOR THIS RECALL WILL BEGIN IN ABOUT ONE WEEK.

If you have not already done so, please take the time to ensure that your personnel are prepared to execute a customer friendly process for inquiries, scheduling and repairing the involved vehicles.

If you have any questions regarding this action, please contact your Service and Parts District Manager.

Customer Services Field Operations  
DaimlerChrysler Corporation

All Dodge Dealers

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Subject: 2004 Durango Stop Sale

December 12, 2003

Earlier today you were notified about a Stop Sale on the new 2004 Durango. We support this action and don't want customers driving these units. However, it is acceptable to present & close customers on the new Durango as long as this repair is completed prior to delivery. So, we'd ask you to sell those customers you see during the weekend and complete the quick repair before delivery on Monday.

If we follow this plan we will maintain the momentum that we are experiencing on this great new product.

G.E. Dilts  
Senior Vice-President Sales

# DAIMLERCHRYSLER

December 2003

Dealer Service Instructions for:

## **Safety Recall No. C43** **Instrument Cluster Capacitor**

03V-528 ⑦ or ⑰

### **Models**

**2004 (HB) Dodge Durango**

**NOTE:** *This recall applies only to the above vehicles built through December 7, 2003 (MDH 120701).*

**IMPORTANT:** *Many of the vehicles within the above build period have already been repaired at the assembly plant and will show as "Complete" on the VIP system.*

**IMPORTANT:** Some of the involved vehicles may be in dealer new vehicle inventory. Federal law requires you to stop sale and complete this recall service on these vehicles before retail delivery. Dealers should also consider this requirement to apply to used vehicle inventory and should perform this recall on vehicles in for service. Involved vehicles can be determined by using the VIP inquiry process.

### **Subject**

An instrument cluster circuit board capacitor on about 27,000 of the above vehicles may overheat and cause an instrument panel fire.

### **Repair**

The affected capacitor is redundant and must be removed from the instrument cluster circuit board.

### **Parts Information**

No parts are required to perform this service procedure.

**Service Procedure**

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1. Disconnect the negative battery cable.

**NOTE:** To enhance customer satisfaction, remember to reset the clock when you have completed the service procedure.

2. Remove the two (2) steering column opening cover screws and then remove the cover (Figure 1).
3. Remove the two (2) upper steering column shroud screws and then remove the upper shroud.
4. Move the steering column to its lowest position and then depress the emergency flasher switch.
5. Loosen the two center instrument panel (I/P) bezel screws and then remove the center bezel (Figure 2).

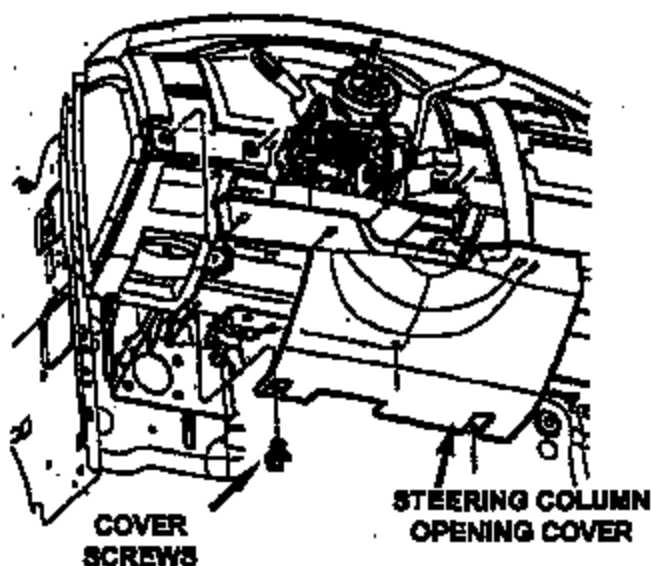


Figure 1

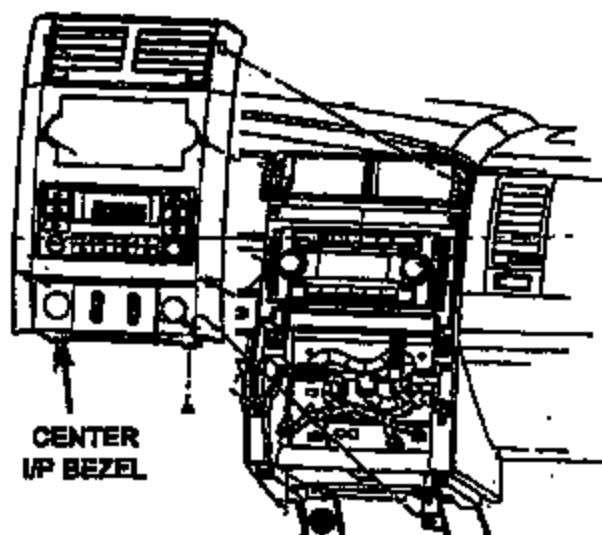


Figure 2



**Service Procedure (Continued)**

6. Remove the two (2) cluster bezel screws (Figure 3).
7. Using a trim stick, separate the cluster bezel from the instrument panel (Figure 3).
8. Disconnect the electrical connector(s) on the rear of the cluster bezel and then set the bezel aside.

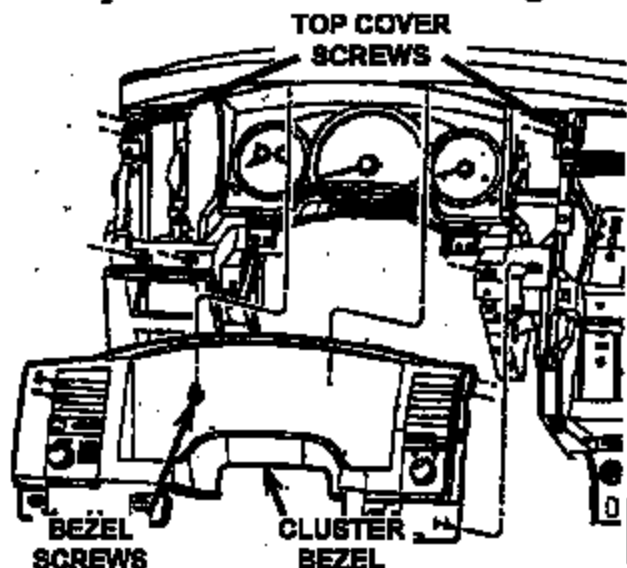


Figure 3

9. Remove the two (2) I/P top cover screws (one at each end of the cluster assembly) (Figure 3) and loosen the top cover screw located under the left I/P end cap.

**CAUTION:** Use care to not scratch the instrument cluster lens. Place a shop towel over the steering column and emergency flasher switch.

10. Remove the four (4) instrument cluster screws (Figure 4).
11. Pull the instrument cluster rearward just far enough to access and disconnect the electrical connectors on the back of the cluster housing (Figure 5).

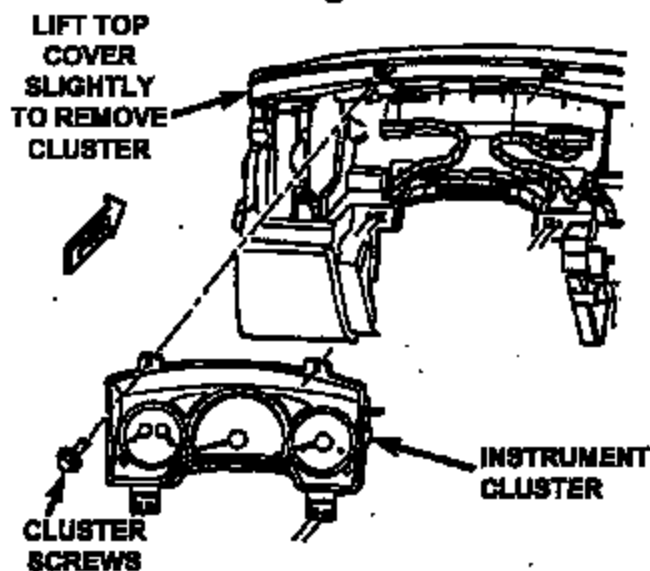


Figure 4

12. Set the instrument cluster face down on a soft surface to protect the instrument cluster lens from being scratched on the workbench.

**IMPORTANT:** Do NOT leave the instrument cluster in a horizontal position with the gauges facing down for more than 30 minutes. Damage to the gauges will result.

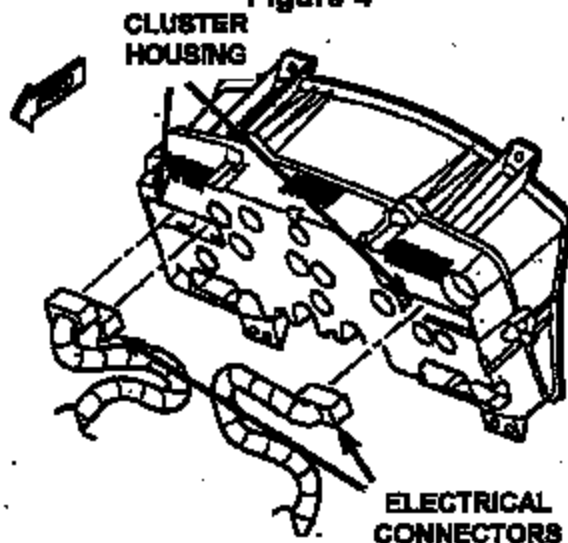


Figure 5

**Service Procedure (Continued)**

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13. Remove the twenty-two (22) screws from the rear cluster cover (Figure 6).
14. Carefully remove the rear cluster cover from the instrument cluster.
15. Reinstall two of the screws that were removed in Step 13 to temporarily secure the circuit board to the cluster gauges (Figure 7).

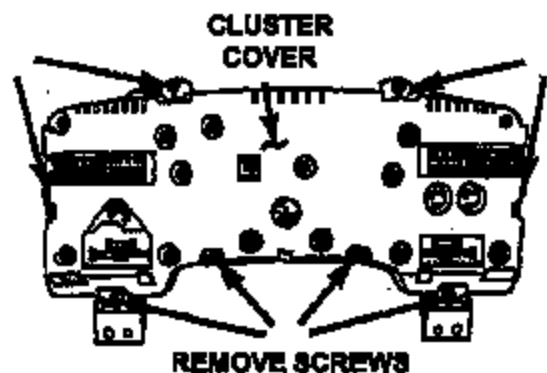


Figure 6

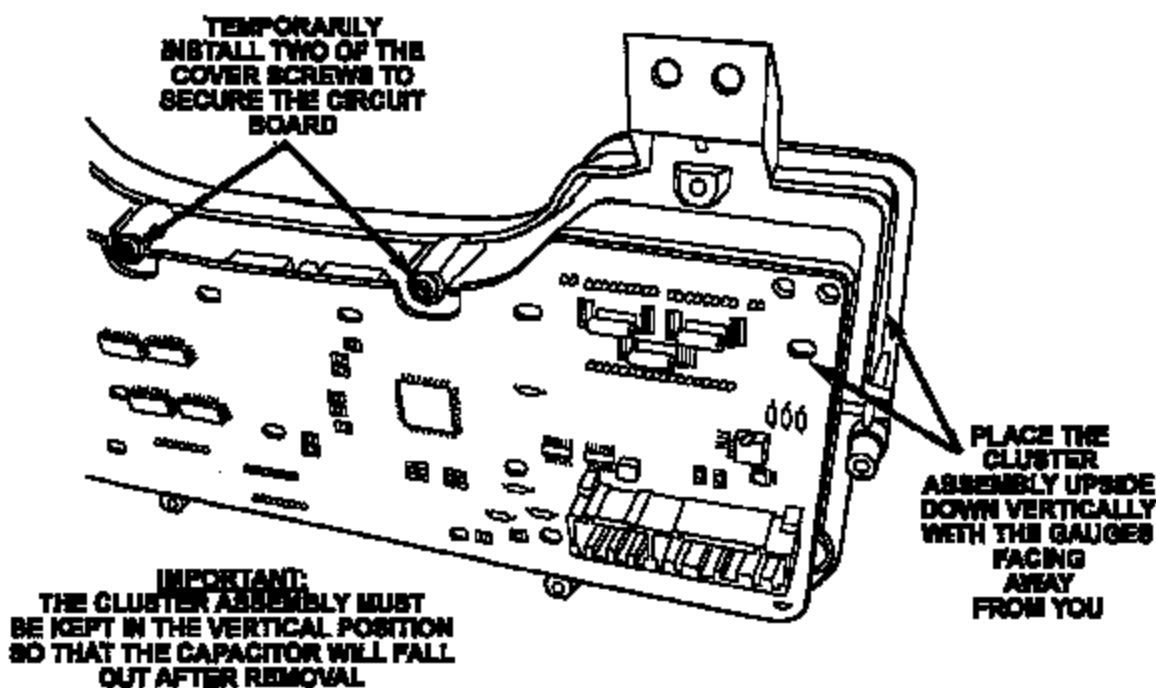


Figure 7

**IMPORTANT:** The cluster circuit board should only be handled on the edges. To prevent circuit board damage, do NOT touch any components on the circuit board.

16. Position the circuit board assembly on the workbench, such that the circuit board is vertical and the gauges are upside down and facing away from you (Figure 7).

**Service Procedure (Continued)**

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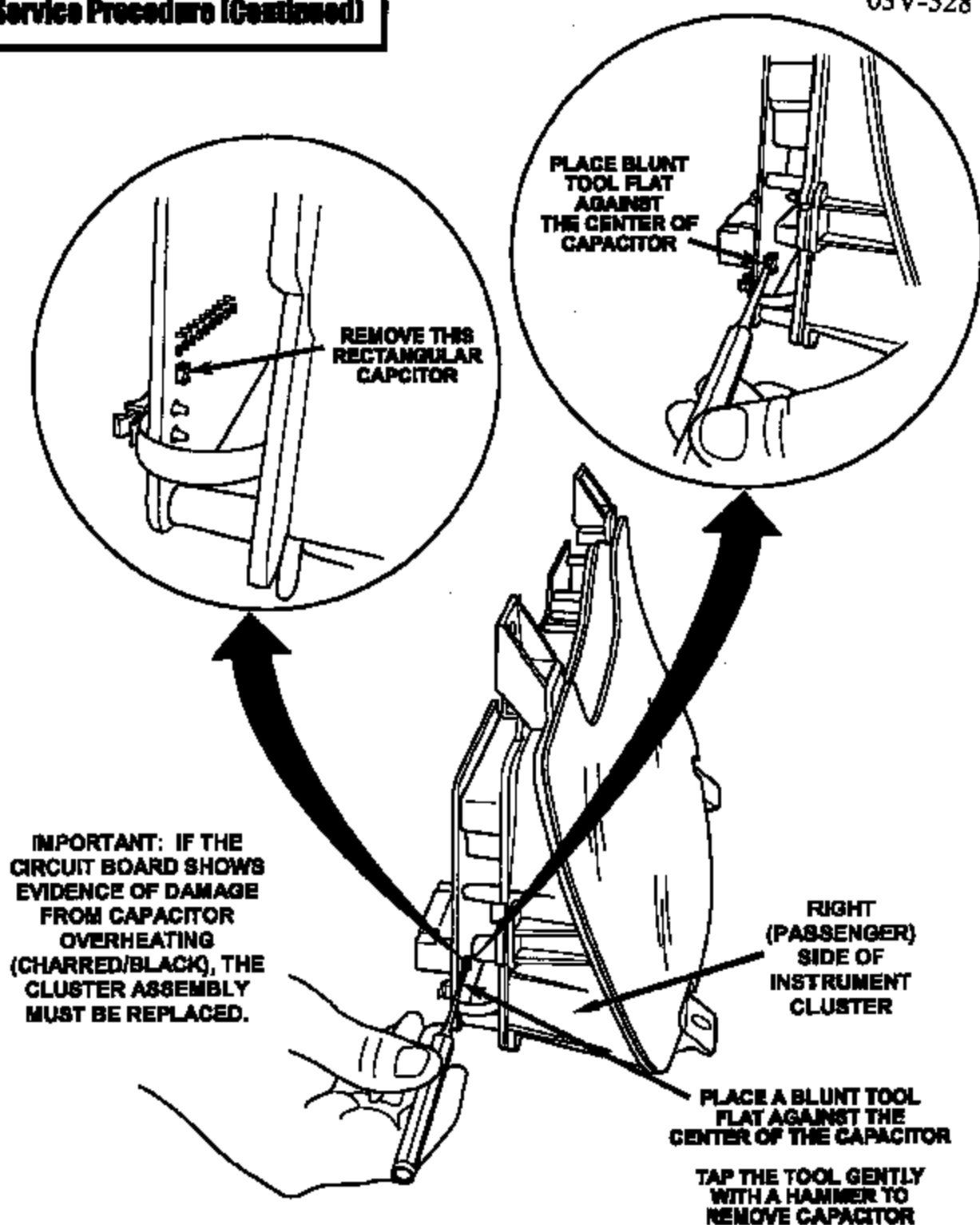


Figure 8

**Service Procedure (Continued)**

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17. Place a **blunt tool** such as a 5/32" pin punch against the circuit board capacitor on the right (passenger) end of the circuit board (Figure 8). Do NOT use a tool that is wider than the overall width of the capacitor.

**IMPORTANT:** If the circuit board shows evidence of damage from capacitor overheating (charred/black), the cluster assembly must be replaced. Use normal service procedures to obtain a replacement cluster assembly.

18. **Gently** tap the tool with a small hammer to separate and remove the capacitor from the circuit board. Keep the circuit board in the vertical position so that the removed capacitor falls away from the cluster assembly.
19. Inspect the capacitor location and ensure that all of the capacitor material has been removed from between the two terminals and make sure that the capacitor has fallen away and is not trapped within the circuit board assembly.
20. Remove the two temporary screws from the circuit board assembly (Figure 7).
21. Carefully install the rear cluster cover onto the instrument cluster.
22. Install the twenty-two (22) screws into the rear cluster cover (Figure 6). Tighten the screws securely.
23. Position the instrument cluster so you can access and connect the electrical connectors on the back of the cluster housing (Figure 5).
- CAUTION:** Use care to not scratch the instrument cluster lens. Place a shop towel over the steering column and emergency flasher switch.
24. Install the cluster into the instrument panel and then install the four (4) instrument cluster screws (Figure 4).
25. Install the two (2) I/P top cover screws (Figure 3) and tighten the top cover screw on the left end of the I/P. Install the left I/P end cap.
26. Connect the electrical connector(s) on the rear of the cluster bezel.
27. Install the cluster bezel (Figure 3).

28. Install the two (2) cluster bezel screws (Figure 3).

**NOTE:** Clean any finger prints from the cluster lens using Mopar Glass Cleaner and a soft clean cloth.

**Service Procedure (Continued)**

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29. Install the center I/P bezel and tighten the two (2) bezel screws (Figure 2).
30. Install the upper steering column shroud.
31. Install the steering column opening cover and then install the two (2) cover screws (Figure 1).
32. Connect the negative battery cable.
33. Connect the StarSCAN<sup>®</sup> diagnostic tool to the vehicle diagnostic connector, select "ECU View" and clear all fault codes that may have been set in any of the vehicle electronic modules.
34. Using the StarSCAN tool, run the instrument cluster self-test as follows:
  - a. From the ECU View, select "CCN – Cabin Compartment".
  - b. Select "More Options".
  - c. Select "System Test".
  - d. Select "CCN Self Test".
  - e. Press START.
  - f. Press NEXT.
  - g. Press FINISH.
  - h. Press the ON/OFF button twice to turn the StarSCAN tool off and then disconnect the StarSCAN tool.
35. Verify that the seat belt indicator lamp, key in ignition warning chime and power door locks function properly.

**Completion Reporting and Reimbursement**

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Claims for vehicles that have been serviced must be submitted on the DIAL System or on the DealerCONNECT Claim Entry Screen located on the Service tab. Claims submitted will be used by DaimlerChrysler to record recall service completions and provide dealer payments.

Use one of the following labor operation numbers and time allowances:

	<b>Labor Operation Number</b>	<b>Time Allowance</b>
Remove instrument cluster capacitor	08-C4-31-82	0.8 hours
Replace damaged instrument cluster	08-C4-31-83	0.8 hours

NOTE: See the Warranty Administration Manual, Recall Claim Processing Section, for complete recall claim processing instructions.

**Parts Return**

Not applicable.

**Dealer Notification and Vehicle List**

All dealers will receive a copy of this dealer recall notification letter by DMAIL and by first class mail. Two additional copies will be sent through the DCMMS. DealerCONNECT will be updated to include this recall in the near future.

**Vehicle Lists, Global Recall System, VIP and Dealer Follow up**

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All involved vehicles have been entered into the DealerCONNECT Global Recall System (GRS) and Vehicle Information Plus (VIP) for dealer inquiry as needed. Involved dealers were also mailed a copy of their vehicle (VIN) list with the dealer recall notification letter.

GRS provides involved dealers with an updated VIN list of their incomplete vehicles. The owner's name, address and phone number are listed if known. Completed vehicles are removed from GRS within several days of repair claim submission.

To use this system, click on the "Service" tab and then click on "Global Recall System." Your dealer's VIN list for each recall displayed can be sorted by: those vehicles that were unsold at recall launch, those with a phone number, city, zip code, or VIN sequence.

Dealers must perform this repair on all unsold vehicles before retail delivery. Dealers should also use the VIN list to follow up with all owners to schedule appointments for this repair.

*Recall VIN lists may contain confidential, restricted owner name and address information that was obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles of various states. Use of this information is permitted for this recall only and is strictly prohibited from all other use.*

**Owner Notification and Service Scheduling**

All involved vehicle owners known to DaimlerChrysler are being notified of the service requirement by first class mail. They are requested to schedule appointments for this service with their dealers. A copy of the owner letter is attached.

Enclosed with each owner letter is an Owner Notification Form. The involved vehicle and recall are identified on the form for owner or dealer reference as needed.

Dealers are encouraged to consider alternative scheduling and servicing approaches for this recall. This repair does not require hoists or other full service facility special equipment and is a DaimlerChrysler Mobile Service approved repair.

**Additional Information**

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If you have any questions or need assistance in completing this action, please contact your Service and Parts District Manager.

Customer Services Field Operations  
DaimlerChrysler Corporation



**SAFETY RECALL - INSTRUMENT CLUSTER CAPACITOR**

Dear Durango Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

DaimlerChrysler Corporation has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists in some 2004 model year Dodge Durango vehicles.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b><i>The problem is...</i></b>                               | An instrument cluster circuit board capacitor on your Durango (identified on the enclosed form) may overheat and cause an instrument panel fire.  |
| <b><i>What DaimlerChrysler and your dealer will do...</i></b> | DaimlerChrysler will repair your vehicle free of charge (parts and labor). To do this, your dealer will remove the affected capacitor from the instrument panel circuit board. The work will take about one hour to complete. However, additional time may be necessary depending on how dealer appointments are scheduled and processed. |
| <b><i>What you must do to ensure your safety...</i></b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Simply contact your dealer right away to schedule a service appointment.</li><li>➤ Bring the enclosed form with you to your dealer. It identifies the required service to the dealer.</li></ul>   |
| <b><i>If you need help...</i></b>                             | If you have questions or concerns which your dealer is unable to resolve, please contact DaimlerChrysler at 1-800-853-1403.   |

If you have already experienced this condition and have paid to have it repaired, you may send your original receipts and/or other adequate proof of payment to the following address for reimbursement: DaimlerChrysler, P.O. Box 610207, Port Huron, MI 48061-0207, Attention: Reimbursement.

If your dealer fails or is unable to remedy this defect without charge and within a reasonable time, you may submit a written complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590, or call the toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236.

We're sorry for any inconvenience, but we are sincerely concerned about your safety. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Customer Services Field Operations  
DaimlerChrysler Corporation  
C43

***Buckle up  
for Safety***